

REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

Claims 7, 13, 16 and 18-23 were pending in the application prior to the submission of this Amendment. Claims 7, 13, 16 and 18-23 stand rejected.

With this Amendment, claims 13, 18, 20 and 23 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced. Claims 7, 16, 19, 21 and 22 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 7, 13, 16 and 18-23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by JP 11084212 A to Fujimoto, et al. (hereafter, "Fujimoto").

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending claims in view of the amendments now presented herein. For example, independent claim 13 has been amended for further clarification to recite:

“An operation apparatus which is used for operating a zoom lens,
comprising:
a zooming switch which is operated to perform a zooming
operation of the zoom lens;
a first function switch;
an operation switch which is operated to allocate one of a
plurality of functions to the first function switch; and
a display member which displays information on the function
allocated to the first function switch.” (emphasis added)

Applicants respectfully submit that Fujimoto does not teach or suggest an operation apparatus which is used for operating a zoom lens, comprising “a first function switch; an operation switch which is operated to allocate one of a plurality of functions to the first function switch; and a display member which displays information on the function allocated to the first function switch”, as recited in amended claim 13.

According to the claimed invention, a function is allocated to the first function switch and the allocated function is displayed on a display member. Thus, a user unfamiliar with the operation apparatus may easily operate the operation apparatus.

The Office Action asserts that Fujimoto teaches the above feature. However, Fujimoto provides no teaching or suggestion that any operation other than controlling zoom speed can be allocated to the control lever 13. Fujimoto discloses a plurality of switches 11 that are operated to set functions of the camera. However, the functions allocated to the switches 11 of Fujimoto cannot be changed. In other words, Fujimoto does not teach or suggest that the functions allocated to switches 11 can be changed by operating a switch corresponding to the operation switch set forth in independent claim 13.

Therefore, Applicants submit that amended claim 13 is distinguishable over Fujimoto for at least the reasons discussed above.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

Applicants have chosen in the interest of expediting prosecution of this patent application to distinguish the cited documents from the pending claims as set forth above. However, these statements should not be regarded in any way as admissions that the cited documents are, in fact, prior art.

Applicants have not specifically addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because Applicants submit that the independent claim from which they depend, either directly or indirectly, is in condition for allowance as set forth above. Accordingly, the dependent claims also are in condition for allowance. Applicants, however, reserve the right to address such rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary.

Applicants believe that the application as amended is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims and allowance of this application.

AUTHORIZATION

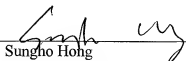
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for consideration of this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1232-5343. A DUPLICATE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No 13-4500, Order No. 1232-5343. A DUPLICATE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: June 23, 2008

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